



Book Review

Bianca Fileborn (2016) *Reclaiming the Night-Time Economy: Unwanted Sexual Attention in Pubs and Clubs*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

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Early in her book, *Reclaiming the Night-Time Economy: Unwanted Sexual Attention in Pubs and Clubs*, Bianca Fileborn (2016: 7) suggests that sexual violence research often focuses on illegal forms of harm, such as rape, sexual assault and child sexual abuse. However, as we have witnessed in the recent international #MeToo and #ShoutingBack movements, there is a growing awareness that there are many other forms of sexual violence, including unwanted sexual behaviours or attention, and everyday encounters of sexual violence that may not be included in legal definitions (Fileborn 2016; Bates 2014; Collier Hillstrom 2019). Earlier research has placed unwanted sexual behaviours or attention within a continuum from 'unharmful' forms of sexual behaviour to 'harmful' forms of sexual behaviour (Kelly 1991); here, Fileborn (2016) employs a post-structuralist approach to explore the instability of this continuum.

In this book, Fileborn analyses the critical importance of licensed venues of the night-time economy in learning more about unwanted sexual attention. The night-time economy is the 'city at night'; a space that is 'associated with the unknown, risk, darkness' and the 'potential for danger' (Fileborn 2016: 18). Licensed venues, she argues, provide unique social spaces and context factors—the intersecting characteristics of pubs and clubs within a night-time economy create 'an emotionally evocative space' (Fileborn 2016: 18). In the course of her investigation, Fileborn (2016: 18) found that the dominant attitudinal and behavioural norms associated with sexual violence are ubiquitous in night-time licensed venues: namely, the potential for experiences that are not available during the day-time and behaviours that are outside the person's normal code of conduct (Williams 2008: 519). The venues were also associated with factors common to many cases of sexual violence, such as alcohol, drugs and sexual desire. Despite this important correlation, very little attention has been given to the unique social context of licensed venues and how it relates to unwanted sexual attention.

Melbourne's night-time pubs and clubs represent only one part of Fileborn's analysis of unwanted sexual attention. The book is also grounded in surveys ($n = 191$), focus groups and interviews with 252 young Melbourne residents who have frequented the venues in question. Fileborn provides little information about the participants in her research. Their sexuality and sex were recorded, but it is only through their responses that we can contextualise how they perform gender, how they belong in their communities and how they navigate sexual interactions or

LGBTIQ+ identities and spaces. These important factors helped Fileborn to examine the night-time spaces of Melbourne pub and club venues, and their connection to unwanted sexual attention.

Initially, the absence of detailed demographic information about participants might seem to be a weakness of the research; however, Fileborn uses their responses, and other research about young people, to provide a comprehensive analysis of young people's cultural and social connections—and their experiences of unwanted sexual attention—within Melbourne's night-time economy. Importantly, Fileborn pays close attention to the distinctive features of night-time spaces and how they contribute to sexual violence. Her considered use of a situational approach demonstrates how pubs and clubs provide a space for the perpetration and victimisation of sexual violence. This approach also helps readers see why sexual violence within these spaces has always been, and continues to be, normalised. Although Fileborn does not provide a level of detail about participant characteristics that could be used to analyse additional intersectionalities, such as ethnicity and social class, she reports on individual traits that are representative of other Australian night-time economies.

In this book, Fileborn has made a significant contribution to the vast body of existing research about sexual violence and harassment, gender, LGBTIQ+ young people, sexual consent and the sexual assault of older women. She adds valuable contextual analysis of the relationship between night-time venues and sexual violence involving young people. Fileborn's research has made a contribution to law reform and justice responses; particularly in her role with the Victorian government taskforce on Sexual Harassment and Assault in Live Music Venues. *Reclaiming the Night-Time Economy* makes recommendations for the implementation of sexual violence prevention in sexual ethics education, and places a much-needed focus on night-time venues themselves.

Reclaiming the Night-time Economy is an important contribution to critical criminological and sociological inquiry that offers an in-depth investigation into core elements of sexual violence within different cultural and social settings. By shining a light on the complexities of the night-time economy and the normalisation of sexual violence in these settings, Fileborn argues that it might be possible to begin a process of 'reimagining and taking back licensed venues' so that sexual violence cannot occur. This book should be compulsory reading for all researchers of sexual violence, particularly those studying sexual violence within an Australian context and who seek to inform changes in law and policy.

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